



**SMALL BUSINESS  
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

**Small Business Development Committee Meeting  
Fall 2020 Warrant Articles Public Hearing  
October 5, 2020 | 5:00-7:00pm | via Zoom Videoconference**

**Committee Members in Attendance:** Raul Fernandez (Chair), Talia Glass, Anne Meyers, David Leschinsky, Melissa Tapper Goldman, Debbie Miller, Elias Audy, Debbie Raisner Thompson, Raj Dhanda

**Committee Members Absent:** Mark Barer, Sandy Machado, and Caitlin Starr (Staff Liaison to the Office of Diversity, Inclusion and Community Relations, who was on maternity leave)

**Staff:** Meredith L. Mooney, Kara Brewton, and Victor Panak,

**Members of the Public:** Anne Sudduth, David Lescohier, Heather Hamilton, and Anthony Ishak

**Materials Presented:** 10/5/2020 public hearing agenda (including links to several reference documents) and excerpts from the 2020 Fall Town Meeting Warrant regarding Warrant Articles 9-11, 12, 14-15, and 24-25

**Meeting Minutes**

**A quorum was not assembled until 6:15pm when Raul Fernandez, Talia Glass, Anne Meyers, Melissa Tapper Goldman, Debbie Miller, and Elias Audy were in attendance.**

**Chair's Opening Remarks:**

- Select Board Member Raul Fernandez provided introductory remarks and introduced Anne Sudduth of Boyer Sudduth Environmental Consultants to present the first agenda item regarding the SBDC's potential partnership with Climate is Everybody's Business initiative to promote National Energy Awareness Month and the upcoming 'Save Money, Save Energy and Save the Planet' webinar.

**Potential vote on partnering with the Climate is Everybody's Business initiative to promote National Energy Awareness Month and the upcoming "Save Money, Save Energy and Save the Planet" webinar on October 15, 2020**

- Anne Sudduth gave a brief presentation about the Climate is Everybody's Business initiative and an upcoming webinar, which would provide important information about how business can save

money through various sustainability programs. Anne invited the SBDC to partner with Climate is Everybody's Business to promote National Energy Awareness Month and the upcoming webinar.

- **VOTE: A motion for the SBDC to partner with Climate is Everybody's Business to promote these two important initiatives was unanimously approved.**

**Review, discuss, and possibly vote on Warrant Article 15 regarding by-law changes to improve opportunities for minority-owned & women-owned businesses**

- The public hearing was postponed. The petitioner did not attend the meeting and the most recent draft of the revised Warrant Article 15 was not available for committee review prior to the public hearing.

**Review, discuss, and possibly vote on Warrant Articles 9-11 – Short Term Rentals**

[Raj Dhanda, David Leschinsky, and Debbie R. Thompson joined the meeting]

- Victor Panak, Regulatory Planner from the Planning and Community Development Department, presented the set of warrant articles, sponsored by the Select Board, proposing to legalize and regulatory certain types of short-term rentals in Brookline.
- Raul Fernandez opened the public hearing for Warrant Articles 9-11 at 5:35pm.
- There was no public comment.
- Raul Fernandez closed the public hearing.
- **VOTE: A motion to recommend favorable action on this set of warrant articles was approved (6-0-3) by roll call vote (AM, DM, TG, MTG, RD, RF in favor; DL, EA, and DRT abstained)**

**Review, discuss, and possibly vote on Warrant Article 12 – Acceptance of the Community Preservation Act (CPA)**

- Select Board Member Heather Hamilton and David Lescohier of the Land Bank Study Committee presented the warrant article proposing to adopt the Community Preservation Act (CPA).
- Raul Fernandez opened the public hearing for Warrant Article 12 at 6:03pm,
- There was no public comment.
- Committee discussion weighted the community-wide benefits of adopting the Community Preservation Act against the potential additional burden the CPA could put on property owners and small business owners through triple net leases. Some committee members expressed questioned the appropriateness of adding any additional burden on businesses amidst the Coronavirus economic crisis. Select Board Member Hamilton explained that creating a commercial exemption within the CPA would have been complicated and too costly to implement.
- Raul Fernandez closed the public hearing at 6:25pm.
- **VOTE: A motion to recommend favorable action did not carry with a 4-1-3 roll call vote (RF, DM, DL, AM in favor; RD against; and TG, MTG, EA abstaining) (DRT did not vote)**

**Review, discuss, and possibly vote on Warrant Article 24 and 25 - By-law amendment- require certain notices to tenants and residents**

- A public hearing on WAs 24-25 was postponed.

**Review, discuss and possibly vote on Warrant Article 14 - Amend Article 8.23 of the Town's General By-Laws – Tobacco Control**

- Warrant Article 14 petitioner Anthony Ishak presented several proposed policy changes to tobacco sales regulations.
- Raul Fernandez opened the public hearing on Warrant Article 14 at 6:40pm.
- There was no public comment.
- Committee discussion focused on the negative impact these proposed changes and restrictions would have on small businesses with tobacco licenses. WA14's proposal to limit tobacco license holders' ability to sell those licenses along with the rest of their business was a particular concern. SBDC members were concerned that such a measure would severely devalue a business. Businesses are already suffering due to the Coronavirus economic crisis, and depriving businesses of much needed revenue from tobacco sales at this point – especially when nearby tobacco sellers in Boston or Newton weren't subject to the same restrictions – could potentially prove fatal to many current tobacco license holders. State-wide action on these proposals would be preferable.
- Raul Fernandez closed the public hearing at 6:57pm.

[Anne Meyers left the meeting.]

- **VOTE: A motion to recommend no action on Warrant Article 14 passed 6-0-1 (RF, TG, DM, DL, RD, EA approved; MTG abstained) (DRT did not vote)**

**Meeting adjourned.**